

lip of which was curved as we see it in the portraits of Byron. . . . He was very showily attired in a dark bottle-green frock-coat, a waistcoat of the most extravagant pattern, the front of which was almost covered with glittering chains, and in fancy-pattern pantaloons. He wore a plain black stock, but no collar was visible. Altogether he was the most intellectual-looking exquisite I had ever seen.<sup>1</sup>

Now that he had definitely emerged as a Tory, Disraeli, heard, of course, a good deal about the ambiguity of his previous performance.<sup>2</sup> 'It is absolutely essential/ wrote D'Orsay on the eve of the election, 'for you to explain to them that though a Tory you are a reforming one ; because it is generally understood that you committed yourself in some degree with the other party.' In his speech on nomination day Disraeli essayed the task thus proposed to him.

Gentlemen, if there be anything on which I pique myself it is my consistency. I shall be ready to prove that consistency either in the House of Commons or on the hustings at Taunton. Every man may be attacked once; but no one ever attacked me twice. Gentlemen, here is my consistency. I have always opposed with my utmost energy the party of which my honorable opponent is a distinguished member. That party I have opposed for reasons I am prepared to give and to uphold. I look upon the Whigs as an anti-national party. When I first entered political life I found the high places of the realm filled by the party of which my opponent is a member. I found they had an immense majority in the House of Commons, acquired by a system of nomination not less equivocal than that of the boroughmongers they affected to destroy. Believing that the policy of the party was such

<sup>1</sup> *Pen and Ink Sketches of Poets. Preachers, and Politicians.* London, 1846.

<sup>2</sup> There was much pother then and subsequently about a certain Westminster Club of which Disraeli had been nominally a member, and which after his resignation assumed a political character and became the Westminster Reform Club; but it is now fortunately unnecessary to enter on the details of a tiresome controversy from which Disraeli emerges quite unscathed. 'Life is too short,' as he said himself in connexion with this affair, 'to refute every misrepresentation of every malicious fool.'

